

# GLOBAL ENDEAVORS

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National Institute of Food and Agriculture, 800 9<sup>th</sup> St SW, Washington, DC 20250



## Dear Colleagues...

As we leave behind the International Programs office and become the Center for International Programs, we take on new responsibilities but maintain our commitment and passion for advancing international agriculture and rural development work. A note from our director, Hiram Larew, will explain more below, but on behalf of the CIP staff, we look forward to working with you, our partners, towards a brighter and healthier food future.

The response to the last issue of *Global Endeavors* and to our new seminar/webinar format has been overwhelming. We will always strive to provide current, interesting information so we can advance together. That said, we're always eager to hear your ideas for seminar topics, articles for the newsletter, or anything else that can help us in our mission. Pass this newsletter on to anyone who you think may be interested, or sign them up for our mailing list; they'll thank you. We do too.

## Webinar

***Tomorrow's Table: Organic Farming, Genetics and the Future of Food is now online!***

***View archived copies of Global Endeavors here.***

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## ***Join Us For***

## **Ensuring Food and Nutritional Security in a Warming, Malnourished World**

Join us at the National Institute of Food and Agriculture's Center for International Programs for a seminar with **Dr. Dyno Keatinge** of AVRDC— The World Vegetable Center.

**October 22, 2010**

**800 9th St. SW, Washington, DC (Waterfront Centre)**

**Room 3301**

**12 p.m. (sharp)**

**For more details contact us at [CIP@nifa.usda.gov](mailto:CIP@nifa.usda.gov)**

**[Click here for webinar!](#)**

Remember to test your connection in advance!

Log-in under "guest" option and enter your email in the provided space.

Selected questions from webinar viewers will be answered by the speakers.

To submit your question during the seminar send an email to [CIP@nifa.usda.gov](mailto:CIP@nifa.usda.gov).

For technical assistance during the webinar call 202-690-2910

**Non-USDA employees who plan to attend in person, contact us by  
COB October 21 to expedite the security check-in process.  
*Space is limited!***

Seminar speakers are guests of USDA-NIFA, speaking off-the-record. Views expressed by speakers do not necessarily reflect those held of NIFA, USDA, or the United States government. Webinars will be archived on our website for future viewing.

## Our Staff

[Hiram Larew](#)  
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## Center for International Programs is Established



NIFA's Director, Roger Beachy, recently announced that "the Center for International Programs is established in the Office of the Director to foster NIFA's global engagement as an agency translating research, education, and extension into achieving sustainable food, fiber, and energy supplies." Over the coming months, we in the center look forward to working with land grant partners and others to shape and pursue this mandate. *Global Endeavors* will be one of the means we'll use to stay in touch, so don't hesitate to let us know if you have questions, news to share, and the like. In the meantime, thanks for the work that you've done— and for the work you will do— to strengthen American agriculture through global engagement. —[Hiram Larew](#), Director, NIFA's Center for International Programs



## Food Aid Nutrition Enhancement Program

USDA's National Institute of Food and Agriculture awarded nearly \$3.8 million to develop healthier food products for humanitarian assistance programs.

"The United States is a major supplier of food aid, feeding millions of people around the world who are suffering during emergency situations," said Roger Beachy, director of USDA's National Institution of Food and Agriculture (NIFA). "These projects will improve the nutritional quality of food aid products these people depend on for survival."

NIFA's Food Aid Nutrition Enhancement Program (FANEP) supports the development and field testing of new ready-to-use foods, fortified blended foods, high-energy foods, micronutrient powders or other food products designed to improve the nutritional delivery and functional form of humanitarian food assistance. Projects funded by FANEP may also field test existing food products that have not yet been approved for use in food aid programs.

Fiscal Year 2010 awards were made to Johns Hopkins University (JHU) and international global health non-profit PATH. JHU received \$2,729,000 to introduce and test three specially formulated foods for children ages 6-24 months in Bangladesh, where childhood under-nutrition is especially prevalent. PATH received \$1 million to field test their Ultra Rice technology in Burundi. Ultra Rice is a proven, cost-effective, and culturally appropriate rice fortification technology that can bridge micronutrient deficiencies and prevent malnutrition in rice-consuming communities.

FANEP is administered through the Agriculture, Rural Development, Food and Drug Administration, and Related Agencies Programs Appropriation Act. This act called for a grant program to enhance the health of individuals, especially infants and young children, at risk for or suffering from malnutrition by further improving the nutritional content, product composition, packaging, and other components of food products delivered through the McGovern-Dole International Food for Education and Child Nutrition program and the Food for Peace Title II humanitarian assistance programs. For more information, visit [www.nifa.usda.gov/fo/foodaidnutritionenhancementprogram.cfm](http://www.nifa.usda.gov/fo/foodaidnutritionenhancementprogram.cfm).

For more information contact [Edwin Lewis](#).



## NEWS FROM CAMPUS...

### Honey Bees in Africa: Back to the Future

By Maryann Frazier, on behalf of Pennsylvania State University

It surprises many people to learn that honey bees are not native to the New World. The earliest records indicate that honey bees were brought to North America from Europe in 1621. However, today, honey bee populations, as well as the populations of other pollinators, are declining. This decline is documented in a 2007 report by the National Academies of Science, *The Status of Pollinators in North America*. Due to this report and the mapping of the honey bee genome, as well as the phenomenon known as colony collapse disorder (CCD) and the media's response to it, there has been a lot of attention paid to this tiny creature. The loss of honey bee colonies could result in lower quality, higher priced foods or the total absence of some foods from the marketplace. There may be a number of reasons why honey bees are declining including loss of habitat, poor nutrition, exposure to pesticides, diseases, and the introduced parasitic mite, *Varroa destructor*, that is considered to be the most devastating pest of *A. mellifera* world-wide.

A 2009 NIFA International Science and Education grant awarded to Penn State's Center for Chemical Ecology, in collaboration with the International Center for Insect Physiology and Ecology (ICIPE), enabled a visit to Kenya. The goal was to study the biology and behavior of African bees and learn how they are kept by beekeepers there. What was discovered on this trip was a surprise. It is now clear that the mite is widespread throughout much of Kenya and is also present on the coast of Tanzania as well as in Ghana.

In 2010, an expanded Penn State/ICIPE team returned to Kenya with funding provided by a Gates-NSF-BREAD grant (Basic Research to Enable Agricultural Development). The 2010 goal was to identify the geographic distribution of the four known *A. mellifera* subspecies in Kenya, to characterize their *Varroa* mite and disease loads and to look for certain behavioral characteristics. We also hoped to learn what impact *Varroa* mites are having on the honey bee populations and whether or not different subspecies are responding differently to the *Varroa* infestations.

Based on the colonies that we inspected, the beekeeper interviews we conducted, and the experience of the ICIPE-beekeeping staff, the health of honey bee populations in Kenya appears to be declining. In general, there are fewer hives being colonized by swarms or migrating colonies of bees than in the past. Hives containing bees are small and are not producing much honey. Colonies in areas where beekeeping has traditionally thrived due to abundant nectar and pollen resources seem to be less affected than are those in areas with poor or limited resources. Potential factors contributing to the decline in health may include loss of foraging areas (deforestation and increased clearing of land for farming), drought and climate change, pesticide use, and, of course, the presence of the parasitic mite, *Varroa destructor*, and the viruses it can transmit. Over the next year, we and our ICIPE counterparts will analyze the samples we have collected, monitor the health of the colonies we visited and conduct additional experiments to increase our understanding of these bee subspecies and their abilities to withstand many of the same pressures that are causing bees to decline in other areas of the world.

We learned from the beekeepers we interviewed that there is an unlimited market for honey. Individuals have the potential to generate income from keeping bees and producing honey, but access to good-quality beekeeping equipment and adequate training is limiting their success. It is important to understand why Kenyan honey bees are not thriving and to find out what needs to be done to ensure healthy, productive populations. We are hopeful that what we learn in Africa will provide clues to help ailing honey bee populations around the world.

Contact [Maryann Frazier](#) for more information.

**Tools for the Spanish-Speaking Community**



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USDA'S Food Safety and Inspection Service (FSIS) has designed food safety tools especially to meet the needs of our Spanish-speaking community: *Pregúntele a Karen* and Twitter in Spanish. With these resources, FSIS can provide consumers with the latest, up-to-date information on recalls and safe food handling tips in Spanish. *Pregúntele a Karen* (Ask Karen) is a virtual food safety representative that can lead live chats in Spanish sharing food safety information.

We encourage folks to follow us at <http://www.twitter.com/usdafoodsafespanish>. FSIS employees write news releases, fact sheets and other educational material in Spanish. To access available material, go to [http://www.fsis.usda.gov/En\\_Espanol/](http://www.fsis.usda.gov/En_Espanol/).



# International Science and Education Competitive Grants Program

NIFA anticipates announcing the Fiscal Year 2011 RFA for ISE grants in November. For more information, visit our ISE website at <http://nifa.usda.gov/fo/fundview.cfm?fonum=1240>

The projects will enhance the international content of curricula, provide faculty with the opportunity to work outside the United States to bring lessons learned back to the classroom, promote international research partnerships, enhance the use and application of foreign technologies in the United States and strengthen the role that colleges and universities play in maintaining U.S. competitiveness.

For more information contact [Patty Fulton](#).

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## Iraq Extension Project Enters Final Year

Since 2007, NIFA's Center for International Programs has collaborated with the Foreign Agricultural Service and a U.S. university consortium led by Texas A&M University to implement the Iraq Agricultural Extension Revitalization (IAER) project. Other land-grant partners participating in this effort are the University of California-Davis, New Mexico State University, Washington State University, and Utah State University. Close to 600 Iraqi extension specialists and university faculty have been trained in third countries (Jordan, Egypt, Lebanon, Syria) and at the U.S. consortium institutions. The train-the-trainer workshops have covered a wide variety of subject areas, as well as extension methodologies and communication. Earlier this year in the Kurdish city of Erbil, the project brought together the 62 Iraqis who had received training in the United States. The purpose was to provide further technical training and learn from trainees how they have used their new skills and knowledge to improve the lives of others. Security concerns have limited the mobility of U.S. and Iraqi participants alike, so we have struggled from the outset to measure the project's impacts closer to the farm level. Recent reports from the field, however, indicate that the IAER training has not only significantly increased the expertise of trainees, but that they have gone on to implement projects, obtain funding, introduce new technologies, and change behavior. During this next (and likely final) year of the project, we will conduct an additional six high-priority training programs in Iraq and assist the University of Baghdad with a curriculum review and development of a certificate program for mid-career extension agents. University of Florida Cooperative Extension employee David A. Drew currently serves as a USDA adviser to Iraq's Ministry of Agriculture and has done an excellent job of ensuring the Ministry's close collaboration in the planning and implementation of IAER.

For more information contact [Mike McGirr](#).

**Send us your stories!**

There is no better platform than *Global Endeavors* to share your news, findings, and thoughts with a large number and vast array of colleagues. If something newsworthy happens at your department, if you'd like to get feedback on an idea, or if you'd simply like to brag, send us a note at [CIP@nifa.usda.gov](mailto:CIP@nifa.usda.gov). We'll review everything that comes our way and publish all the best items.

We'd like to feature a different concept in each edition from now on. So, if you or someone you know is involved in *Information and Communications Technologies (ICTs) in agriculture, or any innovative technology*, drop us a line. It's a fascinating, up-and-coming field that we plan to explore in our next issue and we'd all like to know how it's impacted your work.